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**Epping Urban District Council**

# **Annual Report**

of the

**Medical Officer of Health**

including the Report of the

**Chief Sanitary Inspector**

**For the year ending December 31st, 1947.**





# Epping Urban District Council

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To the Chairman and Members of the  
Epping Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1947, on the health and sanitary circumstances of the district.

It was on 15th April, 1947, that I took office as Medical Officer of Health of the district in succession to Dr. Watney, to whom I am grateful for the medical statistical data in respect of the period covered by the report prior to that date.

The matter of greatest concern during the year was the occurrence of the most serious epidemic of Infantile Paralysis which has ever taken place in the country. Between May and December 8,157 cases were notified in the British Isles. Owing to the tragic nature of this disease, striking down suddenly and indiscriminately both children and adults in the prime of life and vigour, a great deal of public anxiety was prevalent. Many were the consultations held over slightly ill children at this time, as the danger was ever in the public eye; and no one can say how many of them may have actually been infected with a very mild form of the disease which mercifully failed to develop into the dreaded paralytic form. All possible steps were taken to limit the spread of infection and to allay the general anxiety, and it is satisfying to note that in this district only two confirmed cases of the disease occurred during the year among persons normally resident in the district, and that recovery took place in both cases. Six other cases were notified from St. Margaret's Hospital, of which two on further observation were not confirmed, and the other four were residents of neighbouring districts served by the hospital.

An outbreak of gastroenteritis occurred in July, 1947, at the residential nursery attached to St. Margaret's Hospital. Six children were affected, one of whom died. Routine investigation showed four other children to be carriers of the infecting organism, though these children did not become ill. All the above cases and carriers were removed to Isolation Hospital immediately on detection. Quarantine precautions were instituted from the outset.



An outbreak of dysentery (due to an entirely different infecting organism and unconnected with the previous one) occurred among the same children in November; nine were affected, and two members of the kitchen staff were found to be carriers.

Both these outbreaks were short lived and, thanks to the co-operation and prompt action of all concerned, did not spread to other parts of the Institution or to the community outside. It is, however, unsatisfactory to note that such a large number of the children in the nursery should have become infected on each occasion and due, I feel, to insufficiency of trained nursery staff capable of detecting and taking action in the very earliest stages of illness, and to lack of proper facilities for observation and isolation of suspects on the premises. A full report on each of the outbreaks was submitted to the County Authority, together with strong representations on your behalf for an improvement in staffing and in isolation facilities. It must be remembered at the same time, however, that this nursery was transferred to St. Margaret's in time of emergency (1941) from its original location at Hornchurch, and that the arrangement is only a temporary one likely to terminate in the near future.

In general, the health and nutrition of the population has remained excellent. The birth-rate has risen (from 18.9 to 20.8 per 1,000 of the population) and is now almost identical with the average for England and Wales. Illegitimate births, the frequency of which was commented upon in my last report, have fallen (from 10) to 5 in the current year, which is a more or less normal proportion (4%) of total births, and an index of improvement in social and housing conditions. The death rate among infants under a year old has also fallen (from 17.0 to 15.1 per 1,000 live births), and is less than half the rate for the country as a whole. There were no maternal deaths. Measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever and tuberculosis notifications were all considerably less than in the previous year.

No cases of diphtheria occurred. The immunisation programme was encouraged by your Council's decision during the year to cover the cost of immunisations carried out at parents' requests by their own private doctor as an alternative to the facilities at the Clinic, and a new system was introduced whereby every mother receives a letter by post from the Medical Officer of Health as her child approaches the age of one year, explaining the advantages of immunisation and stating the time and place at which free inoculations can be obtained. 147 children completed the immunisation course during the year and an additional 88 received a "re-inforcing" injection on entering school. By 31st

December, 1947, it is estimated that out of a total of 1,255 children between the ages of 1 and 15 in the district, 884 had completed the course of immunisation (i.e., 70.4%).

The overall death-rate for the district shows a slight increase to 13.5 per 1,000 population (from 12.6 in 1946) owing to three additional deaths each from cancer and pneumonia.

In the statistical tables which follow, births and deaths have been corrected for "inward" and "outward" transfers—i.e., they refer only to persons who normally reside in the district, and they include all births and deaths among them wherever occurring.

Infectious diseases, however, are allocated to the district from which they are notified, irrespective of the normal place of residence of the patient. A relatively high return of infectious diseases is therefore obtained in this district because of the presence of St. Margaret's Hospital, which admits cases for observation from a very wide area. Approximately 40% of the total of 51 admissions from the district to Waltham Joint Isolation Hospital were thus residents of neighbouring districts admitted from St. Margaret's Hospital.

It would be inappropriate to conclude this report without making some reference to the National Health Service Act, 1946, which, at the time of writing, appears certain to come into operation on the 5th July, 1948. From that day on it will, in the terms of the Act, be the duty of the Minister of Health "to promote the Establishment in England and Wales of a comprehensive health service designed to secure improvement in the physical and mental health of the people of England and Wales and the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness."

The Scheme will be administered in three parts, as follows:—

- (1) General practitioner, dental and pharmaceutical services administered by an Executive Council for each County Council and County Borough area.
- (2) Hospital and Specialist services administered on behalf of the Minister by Regional Hospital Boards and Boards of Governors of the teaching hospitals.
- (3) Local and Home Services, comprising the provision of Health Centres, midwifery services, ante-natal clinics for expectant mothers, post-natal clinics for mothers and babies, provision of fruit juices and cod liver oil, dental services for expectant and nursing mothers and young



children, health visiting and home nursing, ambulances, the provision of domestic help on health grounds, special and after care of the sick, and local mental health services. These will be the responsibility of the Major Local Authorities—County Councils and County Borough Councils—which will be known as “Local Health Authorities.”

Towards the end of the year under review, negotiations began between the Essex County Council and the County District Councils in Essex with the object of working out the scheme whereby the Essex County Council, as Local Health Authority, would administer the services, as listed under (3) of the foregoing paragraph, for which they will be responsible. At the time of writing (June 1948) the scheme has been almost completed and approved, with amendments by the Minister of Health. With the exception of the Mental Health Service and the Ambulance Service (which will be administered centrally by the County Council) the services in question will be administered in this area by a “Forest Area Health Sub-Committee,” responsible to the County Health Committee, and composed as follows:—

Representing				
Wanstead and Woodford Borough	...	...	4	
Chingford Borough	...	...	3	
Chigwell U.D.C.	...	...	3	
Epping U.D.C.	...	...	2	
Waltham Holy Cross U.D.C.	...	...	2	
Epping R.D.C.	...	...	2	
Essex County Health Committee	...	...	7	
*Hospital Management Committee	...	...	1	
*Executive Council for Essex	...	...	1	
*Local Medical Committee for Essex	...	...	1	
*Voluntary Organisations	...	...	4	
			Total:	30

\* Nominees to be appointed by the Essex County Health Committee.

It is satisfactory to note that urban and rural districts will be represented on this committee, considering that it will be administering many services which were previously controlled remotely by the County Council from Chelmsford. The decentralisation of control augurs well for the future, and local needs and

problems will be all the more readily brought to the notice of the administering body. Many of your Councillors and Officers have felt that this decentralisation of control does not go far enough, and that the areas of the sub-committees could with advantage have been made smaller and more compact. The difficulties in the way of the County Council in staffing and maintaining numerous small units of administration would, however, be many, not the least of them being that of providing office accommodation, officers and clerical staff for each. The present arrangement has the advantage of making the territory of the Education Division and the Health Area the same, and thus facilitating the co-ordination of the School Medical Service with the other Local Authority Health Services. The scheme also provides for periodic review of the areas in the light of experience, and time alone will tell to what extent revisions may prove to be necessary.

In concluding my report, I would like to record my appreciation to the Staff of the Public Health Department for their help and co-operation, and the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee for their support during the year.

H. FRANKS, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

# Epping Urban District Council

## PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE, 1947

Chairman: Councillor G. Grant Wilson

Members:

Councillor A. L. Fosh

„ H. M. Iversen

.. Miss L. C. Hart

„ ' A. D. Rankine

„ E. A. Sebbage

## PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF:

Medical Officer of Health:

To 15th April, 1947:

Dr. H. A. WATNEY, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

From 15th April, 1947:

Dr. H. FRANKS, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector:

Mr. H. J. MEAD, M.S.I.A., F.I.A.S., M.R.S.I.,

Clerk:

To Oct., 1947: Miss P. Webb (part-time)

From Oct., 1947: Mrs. H. E. Woods (part-time)



# Section A

## STATISTICS and SOCIAL CONDITIONS of the AREA

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,440
Population	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,342
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,740
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	£40,039
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£154

The rate in the pound was 18s. 4d.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

		Male.	Female.	Total.
<b>Live Births :</b>				
Legitimate	...	56	71	127
Illegitimate	...	3	2	5
			<b>TOTAL:</b>	132

Birth rate per 1,000 of the population ... 20.8

		Male.	Female.	Total.
<b>Still Births:</b>				
Legitimate	...	2	4	6
Illegitimate	...	0	0	0
			<b>TOTAL:</b>	6

Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births ... 43.5

		Male.	Female.	Total.
<b>Deaths</b>	...	43	43	86
		(Registrar General's Figures)		

Death rate per 1,000 population ... 13.5

### Deaths of Infants under 1 year:

		Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	...	1	1	2
Illegitimate	...	0	0	0
			<b>TOTAL:</b>	2

Death rate of infants under 1 year (per 1,000 live births) 15.1

Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under age 2 years 0

Deaths from maternal causes ... 0

# CAUSES OF DEATH AS GIVEN BY THE REGISTRAR

## GENERAL FOR THE YEAR 1947

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	1	3	4
Influenza ... ..	1	0	1
Cancer (all forms) ... ..	7	14	21
Intracranial vascular lesions ...	5	4	9
Heart Disease ... ..	12	14	26
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	0	1	1
Bronchitis ... ..	3	1	4
Pneumonia ... ..	4	1	5
Digestive Diseases ... ..	2	0	2
Nephritis ... ..	2	0	2
Congenital malformations ... ..			
Birth injuries ... ..	1	1	2
Infantile Diseases ... ..			
Road Traffic Accidents ... ..	1	0	1
Suicides ... ..	1	0	1
Other violent causes ... ..	1	1	2
All other causes ... ..	2	3	5
	—	—	—
TOTALS:	43	43	86
	—	—	—

Table of Comparative Birth Rates and Death Rates in the year 1947 (Provisional figures based on weekly and quarterly returns). Rates per 1,000 population.

	England and Wales	126 County Bor- oughs and Great Towns including London	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)	London Adm. County	Epping U.D.
<b>Births</b>					
Live Births ...	20.5	23.3	22.2	22.7	20.8
Still Births ...	0.50	0.62	0.54	0.49	0.94
<b>Deaths</b>					
All causes ...	12.0	13.0	11.9	12.8	13.5

## Section B

### GENERAL PROVISION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT

- (a) **Public Health Officers** of the Local Authority (see page 6).
- (b) **Laboratory Facilities.** A Ministry of Health Laboratory operated at St. Margaret's Hospital, Epping. Milk, water and ice cream samples are examined at the Counties Public Health Laboratory, 66, Queen Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.
- (c) **Ambulance Facilities.** A private ambulance situated in the town is available at all hours of the day and night for non-infectious cases. Infectious cases are removed by Special Ambulance situated at Waltham Joint Isolation Hospital.
- (d) **Hospitals.** St. Margaret's Hospital, Epping.  
Waltham Joint Isolation Hospital (for infectious cases only).  
Epping Cottage Hospital.
- (e) **Child Welfare.** The Welfare Authority is the Essex County Council. Clinics are held at the following times at Epping Combined Treatment Centre, Regent Road, Epping:—  
**Dressing Clinic**—every school morning, 9—9.30 a.m.  
**Every Monday morning and afternoon :**  
Dental and orthopaedic clinics (by appointment only).  
Appointments arranged at School Clinic or from School Medical Inspectors.  
**Every Tuesday morning. Tuberculosis Dispensary only.**  
(N.B. Many children who have to be seen at the dispensary are not tuberculosis. May be only being checked up.)  
**Tuesday afternoons.** Dental Clinic (by appointment only).  
Speech Therapy Clinic (by appointment only).  
**Wednesday mornings.** Dental Clinic (by appointment only).  
(Twice a month gas clinic, by appointment only.)  
**Wednesdays, 1.30 p.m.** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. Eye Clinic (by appointment only).  
**Wednesday afternoons.** Dental Clinic (by appointment only).  
Ante-Natal Clinic. 4th Wednesday in the month, 2 p.m.  
**Thursday mornings.** School Clinic, 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.  
\*Diphtheria Immunisation at 11.30 a.m.



Orthopaedic Clinic (by appointment only).

Dental Clinic (by appointment only).

**Thursday afternoons.** Dental Clinic (by appointment only).  
Child Welfare Centre (babies).

**Friday mornings.** Dental Clinic (by appointment only).  
Orthopaedic Clinic (by appointment only).

**Friday afternoons.** 2—3 p.m. Dental Inspection. No appointment necessary. Any child with or without parent can be seen by dentist on this day.

Women's Welfare Clinic, 2nd Friday in month, 2 p.m.  
Orthopaedic Clinic (by appointment only).

\* Diphtheria Immunisation is available free of charge at the above sessions, and also (since June, 1947) under the Urban District Council's scheme, at any doctor's surgery.

Home visiting is carried out by the County Council's Health Visitors in the area.

(f) **School Health Service.** The Education Authority is the Essex County Council. School nurses inspect the children regularly, and there is a medical inspection at each school not less than once per year. Advice and treatment are provided at the Combined Treatment Centre at the appropriate sessions as listed above.

(g) **Tuberculosis Service.** Tuberculosis Dispensary of the Essex County Council at the Combined Treatment Centre, Regent Road, Epping—every Tuesday at 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

During the year the Care Association for the area covering the Chigwell, Epping, Waltham Abbey and Ongar districts continued to function. The Association assists cases awaiting admission to sanatorium in various ways and arranges also for the admission of child contacts to convalescent homes. It concerns itself also with the after care of patients by assistance in obtaining materials for occupational therapy and whenever possible, suitable employment for those fit for work. The Association is supported by voluntary contributions and receives also a grant from the County Council.

The Honorary Secretary is Mr. A. J. Edwards, 37, Woodland Road, Loughton.

(h) District Nurses employed by the Epping District Nursing Association, and midwives employed by the Essex County Council, serve the area.

# Sections C, D and E

## Comprising the Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector

### (i) **WATER**

The whole of the district is still served by the Herts and Essex Waterworks Company. The promised installation of water softening plant is being held in abeyance owing to shortage of labour and materials and the limitation of capital expenditure.

### (ii) **DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE**

**Northern Outfall.** Messrs. J. D. & D. M. Watson have been engaged as consulting engineers to prepare a scheme for enlarging these works. Their preliminary proposals, now before the Ministry of Health, provide for two new filter beds, new humus tank, and sludge digestion tanks and disposal beds. Of the eight samples taken during the year, five were satisfactory and three unsatisfactory.

**Southern Outfall.** Flow recordings taken during the year indicate that these works are also grossly overloaded. A report has been called for from Messrs. J. D. & D. M. Watson. Two good samples were taken, whilst four proved unsatisfactory.

### (iii) **SCHOOLS**

No change.

### (iv) **PUBLIC CLEANSING**

Regular weekly collections of both refuse and salvage have been carried out. Refuse disposal is still by controlled tipping at the southern outfall.

### (v) **CLOSET ACCOMMODATION**

No change.

### (vi) **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

No change.

### (vii) **SWIMMING BATH**

No change.

### (viii) **ERADICATION OF VERMIN**

No serious cases were reported.

The 81 houses occupied during 1947 have done much to alleviate housing conditions in the District and most of the worst cases have been dealt with. New applications, mostly from newly married couples, continue to be received and the waiting list is still over 400.

Further land off Centre Drive has been purchased and this estate will eventually accommodate 188 houses. Roads and sewers for this number were laid during 1947.



The permanent prefabricated houses are now nearing completion and 20 were occupied by the end of the year under review. It is anticipated that the remaining 30 will be completed early in 1948.

(i) **NEW HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR**

By the Local Authority—

Permanent prefabricated houses	...	...	...	20
Permanent houses	...	...	...	58
By other bodies or persons	...	...	...	3
				—
				81
				—

(ii) **INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR**

	Public Health Acts	Housing Acts
(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	20	6
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	72	21
(c) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit by		
1. Informal action by Local Authority or Officers	4	0
2. Service of Formal Notices	13	6
3. Statutory Notices	0	0

**INSPECTION OF FOOD**

**FOOD PREMISES**

During 1947 a special inspection was made of the 29 premises in which food is prepared, stored or sold. As a result, additional washing and lavatory facilities were or are being provided in four cases, and redecorating carried out in five others. The question of Kitchen Hygiene was discussed with proprietors and staff and appropriate literature distributed.

**MEAT**

With the exception of an occasional pig killed for home consumption, all meat continues to be slaughtered outside the Epping Urban Area. Very occasionally home-killed and imported meat is condemned. The Sanitary Inspector is frequently called upon to examine Tinned Meats and other canned goods, where the condition of the food is suspect.



## FOOD CONDEMNED DURING 1947

### MEAT

142 lbs. Grade A Beef  
7 lbs. Braised Lamb  
7½ lbs. Bacon  
6 lbs. Liver Sausage  
25 Mutton Chops  
32 Rissoles  
2 Meat Pies  
3 tins Luncheon Meat  
7 tins Stewed Steak  
1 tin Turkey  
4 tins Beef Loaf  
2 tins Potted Meat  
1 tin Canadian Meat  
1 tin Spam  
1 tin Meat and Vegetables  
2 tins Steak and Kidney  
    Pudding

### FISH

159 lbs. Crabs  
5 Stone Hake  
1 Stone Cod  
1 Stone Coley  
1 tin Pilchards  
2 tins Salmon  
4 tins Brisling

### MILK

All six Cowsheds in the Area continue to be inspected regularly and there have been no contraventions of the Milk and Daries Regulations 1926.

### BAKEHOUSES

No change.

### VEGETABLES

17 tins Beans  
7 tins Peas  
1 tin Beetroot  
3 tins Carrots  
1 tin Spaghetti

### FRUIT

5 tins Plums  
3 tins Tomatoes  
1 tin Potatoes  
2 tins Grapefruit  
1 tin Orange Juice

### MILK

79 tins Milk

### OTHER ITEMS

6 tins Soup  
8 tins Jam  
7 jars Jam  
2 jars Marmalade  
6½ lbs. Butter  
6 lbs. Rolled Oats  
8 ozs. Wheat Flakes  
1 lb. Semolina  
3 lbs. Soyghetti

## **ICE CREAM**

17 Samples were taken of which 12 were unsatisfactory. There is only one manufacturer in the Urban District.

Proceedings were taken and a conviction obtained against an outside Vendor selling Ice Cream from a vehicle on which his name and address were not displayed.

## **FACTORIES ACT 1937**

Routine inspections have been carried out to ensure general compliances with the Factories Act and in particular, adequacy and cleanliness of sanitary accommodation.

Personal contact in every case was sufficient to secure full compliance and no Official Notices were served.

There are no outworkers employed in the District.

# Section F

## PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES

				Cases Notified	to Hospital Cases admitted	Deaths
Measles	...	...	...	15 *(96)	3	0
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	12 (46)	1	0
Dysentery	...	...	...	10 (7)	8	0
				+ 2 carriers	+ 1 carrier	
Gastro-Enteritis	...	...	...	12 (2)	11	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	10 (14)	10	0
Infantile Paralysis	...	...	...	8 (0)	7	1
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	8 (0)	6	0
Infective Hepatitis	...	...	...	0 (6)	0	0
Erysipelas	...	...	...	0 (3)	0	0
Paratyphoid B	...	...	...	0 (1)	0	0
Pneumonia	...	...	...	5 (6)	0	0

\* Cases notified during the previous year (1946) shown in brackets for comparison.

Comparative Tables of Infectious Disease Notification and  
Death Rates per 1,000 of the population in 1947

(Provisional figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns)

### 1. Notifications per 1,000 population

	England and Wales	126 County Bor- oughs and Great Towns including London	148 Smaller Towns (resident populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)	London Adm. County	Epping U.D.
Typhoid Fever	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Paratyphoid fever	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Cerebro-spinal fever	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.00
Scarlet fever	1.37	1.54	1.37	1.31	1.26
Whooping cough	2.22	2.41	2.02	2.80	1.90
Diphtheria	0.13	0.15	0.14	0.14	0.00
Erysipelas	0.19	0.21	0.18	0.22	0.00
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Measles	9.41	9.13	9.58	5.29	2.37
Pneumonia	0.79	0.89	0.68	0.64	0.80



## 2. Deaths per 1,000 population

			England and Wales	126 County Bor- oughs and Great Towns including London.	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 census)	London Adm. County	Epping U.D.
Typhoid and Para-							
phoid	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Scarlet fever	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Whooping cough	...	...	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.00
Diphtheria	...	...	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Influenza	...	...	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.16
Smallpox	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Measles	...	...	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.00

### Tuberculosis

4 new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and 0 cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis were notified during the year. There were 4 deaths from tuberculosis. Corresponding figures for the previous year (1946) were 11, 4 and 3 respectively.

Comments on the above tables, and notes on measures of control, are included in pages 1 and 2 of this report.



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